

**261—42.4 (15) Application scoring and approval process.**

**42.4(1) Scoring criteria.** The authority will not review or score an application unless the application meets the requirements and deadlines of rule 261—42.3(15). An application meeting the requirements and deadlines of rule 261—42.3(15) will be given a numerical score between zero and 100. The higher an application's numerical score, the more likely it will receive funding under the program. The criteria used to score the applications and the maximum number of points that may be attributed to each criterion are as follows:

*a.* Project information: 15 points. The applicant will explain the project, the time line for its creation and implementation and how state funds will support the project. The authority will view favorably information that clearly articulates the project, sets forth a reasonable time line for the project's creation and implementation, and fully describes how state funds will be used to support the project.

*b.* Tourism industry growth: 15 points. The authority will consider how the project supports the mission of the Iowa tourism office and how the project grows state and local economies. The authority will view favorably applications that are most in line with the mission of the Iowa tourism office and have the most potential to create economic growth.

*c.* Participation in the tourism industry: 15 points. The authority will view favorably applicants whose representatives are active in the tourism industry. Examples of active participation in the tourism industry include but are not limited to membership in one or more tourism regions; attendance at the Iowa tourism conference; participation in the Iowa tourism office's partnership programs (cooperative and Iowa travel guide advertising); participation in the Travel Federation of Iowa's District Leader Program; and participation in other statewide tourism-related groups such as the Iowa Group Travel Association and Iowa Destination Marketing Alliance.

*d.* Need: 15 points. The authority will consider the financial need of an applicant and will recognize the importance of funding projects that would not take place without assistance under the program.

*e.* Quality and strategy: 15 points. The authority will view favorably projects that are part of a broader strategy to increase tourism locally and in the state of Iowa.

*f.* Local cash match/leveraged funds ratio: 10 points. The authority will consider the proportion of local cash match to the project's total budget and will view favorably applications with the highest ratio of local cash match to the project's total budget.

*g.* Collaboration: 5 points. The authority will view favorably applications that represent a collaboration of multiple entities.

*h.* Iowa tourism office recognition: 5 points. Applicants may determine the most appropriate way to recognize the authority's Iowa tourism office for its investment in the project. The authority will view favorably applicants with a well-developed plan to recognize the Iowa tourism office.

*i.* Population diversity: 5 points. Applications from an applicant based in a rural area, as defined in rule 261—42.1(15), will receive 5 points. Applications from applicants not based in a rural area will receive zero points. If the application is a collaborative application, population diversity will be based on the community of the head applicant.

**42.4(2) Approval process.** The director of the authority will establish a review committee consisting of members of the Iowa tourism industry. The committee will score all completed applications in accordance with the criteria described in rules 261—42.3(15) and 261—42.4(15) and will use those scores to determine successful applicants. The committee may recommend partial funding of any or all applicants. If, after initially scoring all of the completed applications, the review committee is not able to allocate all the funds available, the authority may allow one or more additional rounds of applications to be submitted and scored. Before the execution of contracts, the authority will provide an award letter for each successful applicant to indicate the applicant's acceptance or rejection of the recommended award amount. If any awards are rejected, the authority may allow one or more additional rounds of applications to be submitted and scored. For each additional round of applications, the authority will follow the same eligibility requirements and use the same scoring criteria as used

in earlier rounds. The authority may accept as many rounds of applications for awards as it deems appropriate.

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